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Tuesday, 23 November 1993 at 10 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana)

Vice-President: Mr. MARTINI HERRERA (Guatemala)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 33

QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL:

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/48/264 and Add.1, Add.2 and Add.2/Corr.1, Add.3 and Add.4)

The PRESIDENT: Before calling on the first speaker I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed today at noon. If I hear no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to inscribe their names on the list as soon as possible.

Mr. SHAHEED: (Syrian Arab Republic) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: Since the old world order has ended, the management of that old order should end as well. If there really is a new world order, it stands in need of a new management. The Security Council as it stands no longer reflects the new realities of the international situation. Rather, it reflects the realities of the international situation that prevailed at the end of World War II. The world that has taken shape over the decades from the end of World War II to the end of the cold war is a much changed world. The United Nations itself has changed. Its membership is four times greater than it was when it was established.

That is the reason why many speakers in the general debate at the beginning of this session spoke of the need to review the membership of the Security Council so as to enable the Council to play a decisive role that would be consonant with its mandate under the United Nations Charter. Such a goal would be achieved through an equitable increase in the membership of the Security Council and a comprehensive review of the Council's procedures and decision-making process.

The Foreign Minister of my country stated at the beginning of the session that:

> "In this context, we find no better framework than the United Nations to promote international dialogue and cooperation. In order for such dialogue to have positive and fruitful results in the interest of all concerned, it is necessary to introduce democratic reforms that would restructure the decision-making process in the Organization so that it may reflect the views of the majority. It is not reasonable, for instance, to allow the United Nations machinery to be manipulated, sometimes, in order to intervene in the internal affairs of countries under one pretext or another, before the Member States themselves are given the chance to introduce the necessary reforms that would restructure the United Nations in such a way as to guarantee equitable representation in its main organs and prevent the use of selectivity and double standards in addressing the issues that are of

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vital importance to Member States." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 14th meeting, p. 18)*

An increase in the membership of the Security Council would enhance its effectiveness and better enable it to discharge its principle responsibility under the Charter, namely the maintenance of international peace and security. It would also enable the Council to conduct more democratic and significant discussions on important issues in an equitable and just manner and would ensure that the resolutions adopted by the Council express, genuinely, the will of the international community and thus enhance the legality of its actions and encourage acquiescence in its resolutions.

There is no doubt that an equitable increase in the membership of the Security Council, whose work has been hampered in general by the actions of its permanent members over the past decades, would not in any way hamper its work or make it less effective. Rather, such an equitable increase would increase the ability of the Security Council to reflect more effectively the concerns of the Organization's membership which, at present, stands at 184 States, most of which are developing countries that have the will and the ability to participate in the maintenance of international peace and security through peace-keeping and other activities of the United Nations. That is the reason why those Member States should be given access to the permanent membership of the Security Council. This could be done by adding one permanent member to represent each developing region. For example, a permanent seat could be given to the Arab Group in the Security Council, with all the attendant powers. That seat would be rotated in a manner to be decided within the framework of the Arab Group. Giving one permanent seat to the Arab Group will certainly enable the Arab countries to play a role that would contribute effectively to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Security Council, as it stands, continues to be one of the least democratically representative organs of the United Nations. This stems from unequal geographical representation in the Security Council and from the exercise by its permanent members of the power of veto which, in itself, is an anachronism. It is also undemocratic and runs counter to the fundamental principle of equal rights and obligations for all the Members of the United Nations. That is the reason why the Non-Aligned Movement has continued to underscore the need to democratize international relations, in other words to ensure greater participation in the decision-making process.

Accordingly, my delegation believes that consideration should be given to the restructuring of the Security Council and that such restructuring should not be limited, this time, to a simple increase in membership but should include a comprehensive review of the Council's procedures and decision-making process.

The veto power was instituted in response to realities and situations that no longer obtain. A number of delegations are of the view that the veto is now non-existent in practice, as it has not been exercised of late regardless of the fact that there are numerous international crises. However, the fact that it has not been used of late is no guarantee that it will not be used again. Therefore, we must abolish the right of veto if possible or, at least, restrict its use, especially that since the Council was established, the exercise of the veto has been used with the purpose of imposing solutions that reflected the interests of the permanent members of the Security Council. This has proved to be obstructive to the performance of the Council's paramount role, namely the maintenance of international peace and security.

Here we must mention the efforts of some permanent members to broaden the scope of the Council's tasks and activities in a manner that oversteps, in certain cases, the provisions of the Charter and, in others infringes upon the mandates of other United Nations organs. This has called into question, in some instances, the legality of the Council's measures. Moreover, some Members of the Organization have the feeling that the Council tends to act with alacrity when it addresses issues that involve direct interests of its permanent members. For that reason, we must stress the need for the Council's role to be consonant with its mandate as set out in the Charter so that there may not be any infringement on the competence and authority of the General Assembly and its subsidiary organs.

The Council's procedures and its relations with other bodies have hardly changed since the Council was established nearly half a century ago. Even today, the Security Council acts in accordance with provisional rules of procedure; my delegation thinks it is time permanent rules of procedure were adopted. Currently, Council procedures depend largely on the five permanent members, who try in various ways to dominate the activities of the Council, and on closed informal consultations which have become a daily practice, almost a ritual.

These consultations deprive non-members of the Security Council of the opportunity to take part in the discussions that lead to the adoption of resolutions. Also, the way in which Council meetings are announced makes it difficult for non-members to cover the meetings, especially those that are convened following informal consultations. In this respect, it is worth noting that the Council has only recently adopted the practice of

announcing its agenda in the *Journal* in advance of its meetings, as the General Assembly does.

These facts show that the Council's work is somewhat lacking in transparency. As media coverage of the Council's activities is very important in explaining the work of the United Nations to world public opinion, we believe a Security Council spokesman should be appointed to facilitate such coverage. Greater transparency would certainly enhance the Council's credibility.

The Council should also appoint a special rapporteur to handle relations with the General Assembly; the Assembly's role *vis-à-vis* the Council has been, and continues to be, limited to receiving a report on the Council's work. We believe that that report should be more detailed and more analytical so that it may truly inform the States Members of the Organization concerning all that is adopted in their name.

Change is not an end in itself. It is the indispensable means of ensuring that the Council adapts to a changing world. The need for carrying out the necessary reforms in the Council is clearly reflected in resolution 47/62, which was adopted by consensus.

The present international situation; the increased membership of the United Nations; the need to ensure respect for the principles of equality and of sovereignty, democracy and transparency in decision-making: all these considerations make it imperative to review the current composition of the Security Council, which, as I have said, no longer corresponds to international realities. The Council must be enabled to play its role in the new international climate in which there is a lot of talk of an interdependent world wherein participation in decision-making is a fundamental right of all States.

Mr. SOMAVIA (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Today the General Assembly begins its consideration of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. We all know that this question is crucial for the future of the United Nations. It is not a matter of merely discussing the practical aspects of increasing the Council's membership, but of stating our views on the role the Security Council should play - and the role it should not play - in the post-cold-war world: both dimensions of the question are essential.

The great importance of this issue was seen during this session's general debate, during which nearly all Heads of State and Ministers for Foreign Affairs made reference to it.

It has been said many times in this Hall that the current changes on the international scene are exceptional in their profundity, in their content and in their swiftness. That is certainly true, and the United Nations cannot ignore those changes. Adapting to the international community's present needs makes reform an imperative duty.

The Security Council is static in its structures and hyperactive in its decisions, a formula fraught with danger.

Chile believes that such major reforms must involve broad, solid political agreement reflecting the will of the majority of States. In that consensus, the support of the five permanent members of the Security Council will be indispensable.

We welcome and fully agree with the view the Secretary-General expressed in his report on the work of the Organization, that

> "The question of the Security Council's membership structure is of crucial importance, and I look forward to the issue being resolved by the time of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization". *(A/48/1, para. 40)*

My Government considers that in restructuring the Council we must focus particularly on strengthening the effectiveness, representativity and legitimacy of its work.

We share the view that change in the Security Council must reflect present international realities through the inclusion of new world Powers as members. Their inclusion must indicate a genuine, resolute commitment to the delicate task of the maintenance of international peace and security.

It is thus essential that the Security Council, which acts on behalf of all the Members of the Organization, pursuant to Article 24 of the Charter, should have a membership that reflects adequately the increase in the membership of the Organization, and also its regional, political, cultural and religious diversity. This increase in the membership of the Security Council, which should ensure better and more appropriate representation of all the Member States, should not affect the effectiveness and, when relevant, the speed of the decision-making process in this vital organ of the United Nations system.

With regard to the veto power, Chile believes as a matter of principle that the veto is not a democratic mechanism. Nevertheless, we believe that, for the time being, reform of the veto power is not viable. We recognize that the Council's work Council has been facilitated by the climate of improved cooperation and political consensus which has prevailed in this new phase

of international relations, one very positive result of which has been the limited use of the veto power.

On the basis of that experience, we could perhaps explore formulas that could regulate the use of the veto power in future. For example, I think it would be possible for the five Powers that have the veto power in the Security Council to undertake voluntarily, in a great democratic gesture, to renounce its use in one crucial and symbolic decision of the Organization: the election of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. This would indeed be a great democratic gesture on the part of the five Powers.

The report of the Secretary-General (A/48/264 and Add.1-4) contains comments submitted by 75 Member States on this issue. An analysis of those comments shows that there is a clear consensus in the international community on the unavoidable need to proceed as soon as possible to reform the present structures of the Security Council.

In the light of what we have just said, and in order to attain the established objectives, Chile has made the following specific suggestions which should be considered in any reform of the Security Council.

The Security Council should be made up of no more than 25 members, which could be grouped into four categories: permanent members; permanent members without the veto power; regional members serving a long term of office; and non-permanent members.

The first category - the group of permanent members with the veto power - would be those States which have this right in the Council today.

The second category would be two new permanent members without the veto power; it would include nations that today have a real capacity to make a substantial contribution to the Council's work, given their economic and political potential: I refer to Japan and Germany.

The third category would be regional members serving a long term of office. These would be States from the developing world which, because of their specific importance, could regularly join the Council as representatives of their regions or subregions, and they too would not have the veto power. These regional representatives serving a long term of office would be members for longer periods than the non-permanent members and would be eligible for immediate re-election. Thus the length of time a country would be a member of the Council would depend on the will of each region. Depending on the outcome of this experiment, it would be possible for regional groups to decide to request that some of their members be placed in the category of permanent members without the veto power. The modalities for this category of membership would certainly require deep, detailed study, and we are prepared to consider what other States may have to suggest in this respect.

The final category, that of non-permanent members, would be members elected in the same way as the current non-permanent members are elected; in other words, there would equitable geographical distribution and they would serve a two-year term and could not be re-elected.

All this would make it possible better to meet and to reconcile individual and regional aspirations, and it would at the same time ensure a balance in the Security Council's membership, deliberations and decision-making process.

We believe that any process of reform would be incomplete if it did not include two elements that we regard as vitally important - that is, the need for transparency in decision-making in the Security Council, and for information relating to its work to be provided to the other organs in the system, particularly the General Assembly. For some time now, various Member States have been repeatedly expressing this idea. They have done so both in comments submitted to the Secretary-General and in statements made in the general debate at this session. We are glad that some of the suggestions made have been taken into consideration and have been applied by the Security Council in the last few months. In particular, we would like to highlight the symbolic and political gesture by the Ambassador of Brazil, His Excellency, Mr. Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg, when, as President of the Security Council, he personally presented the Council's report (A/48/2) to the General Assembly this year. Much remains to be done, however, and this is a good opportunity to discuss some practical measures that could be taken.

The current era of greater cooperation between the major Powers has enabled the Security Council to work intensively in support of international peace and security by adopting a far larger number of resolutions and presidential statements than in the past. Also, decisions have been taken more frequently to establish peace-keeping operations in various parts of the world, which means that today thousands of men and women are making a valuable contribution as part of these operations.

We welcome the reactivation of this organ of the United Nations, but at the same time we have to exercise prudence in analysing the road to be travelled in future and the real means - political, material and organizational - available to the Organization for the effective

implementation of its resolutions. There is nothing that so weakens the United Nations as the inability of the Security Council to ensure that its own decisions are implemented. We have to study much more carefully the commendable goals sought as compared to the real means available to attain them.

The Security Council has to find the right road, somewhere between the immobility of the past and the activism of the present, so that it can responsibly carry out its paramount work of maintaining international peace and security. We know that this is difficult. We know that those who are the victims of the various crises in the world hope that the United Nations will be able to do something for them. We know that after each decision by the Security Council there are countries that legitimately feel it essential that action be taken - and taken quickly and effectively. There are of course many recent successes that deserve our commendation and support. But we also know that the Organization is not adequately prepared to carry out this work. It is proceeding along a road that is heavily mined, and there have already been enough explosions for us to understand that the image and credibility of the United Nations as a whole, and not only the Security Council, are being negatively affected.

If we recall the preamble to the Charter, we have to conclude that it cannot be the destiny of the United Nations to become the post-cold-war policeman of the world; unfortunately, that is the image it has been giving recently.

If we are to identify clearly what tasks the Security Council will have in the future, we must understand that the very concept of security needs to be broadened.

The principal sources of instability in the world are social tensions that regularly erupt before our very eyes in various regions of the world. We have replaced the danger of the nuclear bomb with the reality of the "social bomb".

Today, the greatest, the most powerful and the most extensive insecurity is that of individuals and is caused by the lack of respect for the dignity of the human being. The insecurities experienced by people in their daily lives are called poverty; unemployment; violence in the home, on the streets and in politics; social disintegration; and a broad sense of being excluded, marginalized and discriminated against. If we really wish to ensure international peace and security, we must first adopt preventive solutions to these problems, for they are very often the direct origin of the open conflicts that the Security Council must take up at a later time.

The main challenge before the United Nations today is to help strengthen human security in all our societies. The United Nations must be able to give political priority to the lives of the humble and dispossessed.

If we look at things this way, it is clear that, except for certain humanitarian emergency situations, the Security Council does not have the instruments to solve the major problems generated by social tensions. Social and economic problems cannot be solved with troops, sanctions or mandatory measures. They can be solved only with development - economic development, social development, cultural development, the development of knowledge and the imagination, and the improvement of peoples' living conditions.

For all our societies, development is the main antidote to insecurity. In the deepest sense, development is the authentic preventive diplomacy for our age. This point of view is not difficult to grasp intellectually, but it has practical implications of great significance. It means that these security problems cannot be taken up by the Security Council because it does not have the mandate or the instruments to solve them. These are matters that legitimately belong to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the specialized agencies and programmes, and the international financial and trade bodies.

Thus, we believe that the practice of imposing enforcement measures under Chapter VII of the Charter has been used far too often in circumstances in which many problems might in time have been solved under the provisions of Chapter VI relating to the peaceful settlement of disputes. Furthermore, the high cost of these operations seriously affects the financial and human resources available to the Organization. It also endangers the implementation of plans and programmes for economic, social and humanitarian assistance and cooperation, which are among the guiding principles of the United Nations.

Chile is ready to contribute actively - as we are now doing - to the quest for the broadest and most solid political consensus that could lead to the successful conclusion of the consideration of the item entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council". Obviously, this should take due account of the interests of the Member States and the various regional groups that make up our Organization.

In conclusion, nothing I have said in any way mitigates Chile's commitment to the central role of the Security Council. We want more transparency; we want greater effectiveness; we want more prudence. But we also

want to continue participating in peace operations that we find appropriate and that are designed, in general, to strengthen the Organization's responsibility for maintaining the peace.

Mr. CHEW (Singapore): When my Foreign Minister, Mr. Wong Kan Seng, addressed the General Assembly on 6 October, he analysed the need for and the possible objectives of Security Council reforms in an approach which anticipated the problems likely to arise. We have already seen some of these problems, which have emerged in informal discussions on the draft resolution recommending the establishment of an open-ended working group to consider all aspects of the question of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council. These problems are associated with the issues of a narrow versus a broad mandate for the working group to consider the Council reform exercise. Looking slightly ahead, we can foresee that all issues, including the basis or criteria for selecting any new members, will need to be adequately addressed in the open-ended working group's discussions in 1994.

My delegation would like to stress that our approach to the issue of Council reform is based on the premise that this exercise is conducted for the general benefit of the entire membership. This is a fair and balanced approach. It implies that all United Nations Members should engage themselves in this issue with a certain degree of broad-mindedness, a spirit of compromise and a willingness to work towards consensus. While each Member State has to protect its national objectives and interests, this approach needs to include an appreciation for the broader interests of the United Nations and of the general membership. To insist strictly and inflexibly on discussing only some issues and not others is a sure recipe for paralysis. That is why we prefer a path that would allow for the consideration of all matters related to the Security Council. In our view, the discussions must necessarily examine the increase of membership as well as other matters related to the Security Council, such as the effective and efficient functioning of the Security Council and the Council's relations with other organs of the United Nations.

My delegation approaches the Council reform exercise from three perspectives. First, we address the need for global leadership to tackle the problems that will confront the United Nations in the immediate future. There is no doubt that the United Nations should continue to provide the necessary global leadership in the post-cold-war world. After all, the United Nations remains the only global Organization charged with the maintenance of international peace and security. In turn, the ability of the United Nations effectively to address international peace and security issues must come from a strong and efficient Security Council, the core of which remains the permanent members.

What then must be the obligations of permanent members of the Security Council in the next few decades? Our view is that with the privilege of permanent status must come permanent responsibility for global leadership and the financial and material burdens that come with that task. Privileges and responsibilities go hand in hand.

At the San Francisco Conference in 1945, Mexico proposed that the distinction between permanent and non-permanent members should be made clear. Mexico pointed out that the privileged position of the permanent members should be based solely on the juridical principle that more extensive rights are granted to those States that have the heaviest obligations. Mexico proposed that the phrase "as the States that have the greatest responsibility for the maintenance of peace" be added to qualify permanent Council seats. This laudable proposal was, however, not taken on board, although in practice the five permanent members have generally accepted this added responsibility.

The example illustrates how difficult the issue of permanent membership was in 1945, and how difficult it remains some 50 years later. The responsibilities of the members of the Security Council, particularly its permanent members, will have to be carefully examined and defined in the light of the new international situation.

My delegation supports the idea that, since the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, its permanent members should meet certain conditions, fulfil certain responsibilities and take on heavier obligations. Only those countries which agree to accept such obligations, to make the United Nations more effective in the post-cold-war era, should be considered for the privileged status of permanent membership.

Some of the criteria for permanent membership have already been spelt out by my Foreign Minister in his statement to this Assembly. I shall not repeat them here. Some additional criteria for permanent membership are, firstly, that a permanent member should have a long-established tradition of conducting itself in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, particularly in settling international disputes by peaceful means and refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

Secondly, a permanent member must have the will and capacity to place military as well as civilian and material resources at the disposal of the United Nations in the event of a crisis.

Thirdly, a permanent member should have a good track record of contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security. It should also demonstrate that it is a responsible and constructive Member of the United Nations by substantively contributing to other aspects of the Organization's activities, including, *inter alia*, enhancing and supporting international economic and social cooperation and providing substantial assistance to developing countries.

Last but not least, an aspirant for permanent membership should be elected only with the support or consensus of all Members of the United Nations. This is to distinguish its election from the election of non-permanent members, which requires only a two-thirds majority.

Small States, by any definition, comprise the majority of the United Nations membership. The issue of Council reform must therefore also be viewed from the perspective of small States. Small States are vulnerable and sensitive to threats to their political and socio-economic well-being. Small States therefore have an intrinsic interest in ensuring an effective and responsive Security Council that has the primary responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security. Secondly, small States should ensure that the instruments for maintaining international peace and security - namely, United Nations peace-keeping, peacemaking and preventive diplomacy - function effectively and efficiently and are well organized. Otherwise, these instruments will become a burden on the international community, and when they are really needed, as in cases of the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of States, the international community might not then have the will or resources to deter such aggression.

In sum, the Security Council must function effectively and efficiently. This, we stress, should be the main guiding principle in the Security Council reform exercise, more so than mere size and representativeness.

Our third perspective is to ask what kind of problems the United Nations will face in the future. Some of the problems have already begun to emerge; these are the problems of underdevelopment, overpopulation, disease, environmental degradation, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and competing nationalisms. They can all be subsumed under the general issue of how to enable 8 to 10 billion people living on an overcrowded planet to cooperate and to abide by the common intentions so succinctly and eloquently spelt out in the preamble of the United Nations Charter.

The United Nations will be the key international instrument to which the international community, especially the small States, must turn for impartial adjudication between competing demands and for the maintenance of international peace and security. The General Assembly, as the most representative United Nations organ, together with the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations specialized agencies, will have to develop or strengthen their capacity to deal effectively with these transnational issues. A strengthened General Assembly will need to work closely with a more efficient Security Council.

That is why we maintain that Council reform should not focus narrowly on enlargement issues, but that Council reform needs also to examine the relationship between the Council and the general membership. To inspire greater confidence amongst the general membership and thus ensure greater support, the Council will also need to become more transparent and more consultative in its methods of work.

Mr. President, with your proven diplomatic skills and with a spirit of cooperation between Member States on this vital issue, we have no doubt that you will successfully guide us through the difficult negotiations that will take place in the open-ended working group. If, at the end of this exercise, we can honestly state that the United Nations system itself has begun changing for the better and in the overall interests of the entire membership and of the United Nations itself as an international organization, then we can truly say that the exercise has been worth while.

Mr. KALPAGÉ (Sri Lanka): General Assembly resolution 47/62 of 11 December 1992 requested the Secretary-General to invite the Member States to submit written comments on a possible review of the membership of the Security Council. Their views are before us in documents A/48/264 and Add.1, Add.2 and Add.2/Corr.1, Add.3 and Add.4.

There is clear agreement that the membership of the Security Council needs to be increased. There are basically three strong arguments for this. First, the membership of the United Nations has risen from 113 in 1965, when the present composition of the Security Council took effect, to 184 in 1993. Secondly, in the evolving international situation, which all members have categorized as being positive, there is a healthy feeling that equal participation, more balanced representation and political equilibrium are vital to promoting the purposes

and principles of the United Nations Charter. Thirdly, the United Nations, through the Security Council, is now not only involved more deeply in its traditional functions, but has also entered into radically new areas of activity that affect all nations in a manner not experienced before.

If the question is purely one of increasing the size of the Council, a suitable mathematical formula could be worked out in relation to the increase in the membership of the United Nations. Sri Lanka would favour enlarging the membership of the Security Council to a number between 21 and 25.

The criteria to determine the equitable distribution of the new seats would be more complex. The so-called regional distribution of seats involves much more than geography. If one goes by the traditional regional classification applied in the United Nations, there are the five regions of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Western Europe and other States, and Eastern Europe. However, in the Security Council the application of the regional yardstick has for historical reasons acquired a heavy political bias. The Council has been affected by the political and ideological stratification of the post-war period. Numerically and in other ways, this has tended to operate inequitably against the African, Asian and Latin American and Caribbean Member States, who have been underrepresented. If the increase is to be on regional basis, Sri Lanka believes it should be applied strictly, accurately reflecting the proportional strength of each region.

Apart from the question of an increase in the Council's membership, the item before us also enjoins us to consider a manner of representation which would be equitable. This concept goes well beyond a purely mathematical division of the proposed increase in seats.

The question involves larger issues such as the concept of the permanent members. It also raises the question as to whether the exclusive exercise of the veto power by the five permanent members is consonant with the expectations of equity and the principle of the sovereign equality of all States under the Charter. Non-Aligned Heads of State at their Summit in Jakarta last year were of the view that the veto powers, which guaranteed an exclusive and dominant role for the permanent members of the Council, are contrary to the aim of democratizing the United Nations and must therefore be reviewed. Past experience has shown that the exercise of the veto has sometimes crippled decisive action in the Council. We must acknowledge, however, that the veto has not been resorted to recently to the extent of its use in the past.

There are historical reasons which account for the present status of the five permanent members of the Security Council. It is important that we do not avoid scrutiny of the institution of the permanent members, because in a sense it lies at the heart of the Security Council's responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. There are new realities - political, military and economic - as well as other factors which have emerged since the five permanent members were invested with special status.

Other countries are being specifically mentioned, discussed and advocated as now also qualifying for the status of permanent members. Some of the arguments presented in support of these countries are at least as cogent as the arguments which were considered valid at the time when the present permanent membership was determined. If indeed we are interested in revitalizing the United Nations and enhancing the credibility, moral authority, effectiveness and representative nature of the Security Council, we should not presuppose that the present situation in respect of the permanent members is for all time. Thought should be focused on whether any additional States should be considered entitled to the status of permanent membership.

Given the special responsibilities accorded under the Charter to the Security Council, any change in its present composition, size and responsibilities needs to be effected only after the most careful thought. Change for its own sake should be avoided. Change should be effected only when alternatives which improve the present situation have been found acceptable.

It is in this context that we welcome the emerging consensus for the establishment of an open-ended working group which would consider the size, composition and basis for new membership in the Security Council and other related matters. The working group should conduct its consideration of these vital issues under conditions of openness and transparency.

The fundamental premise which endures is that the Security Council, whatever its size, composition and powers, is expected to act on behalf of the Member States in the manner that a Parliament or other representative national institution derives its mandate from the people. It loses justification, credibility and thereby eventually its effectiveness should it fail to act on behalf of those whom it is expected to represent.

The operating mandate of the working group concerns much more than mere procedure. Sri Lanka believes that the process of considering representation on the Security Council, briefly summarized, should be one which first,

provides an opportunity for all States to participate on the basis of the sovereign equality of States; secondly, considers all aspects relating to membership of the Security Council without restricting the review to adjustments which would place a few more seats at the table in the Security Council Chamber; and thirdly, takes decisions by consensus, so that they will enjoy universal acceptance.

This would ensure the full support of the entire international community and in turn lend greater strength and effect to Security Council action. This is, after all, our common objective.

Mr. ISMAIL (Malaysia): Malaysia was one of 73 delegations that replied to the request of the Secretary-General as a result of United Nations General Assembly resolution 47/62. This agenda item is one of the most important issues before the international community in our efforts to make the United Nations a true vehicle for global action.

There is a widespread search taking place at all levels to look for new equations and structures to cope with the changing international environment. The United Nations itself must be part of the change to manage critical global issues and to harmonize the actions of nations in the attainment of common goals as spelled out in the Charter.

The reform and restructuring exercise of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields has been making some encouraging progress. In addition, there is an ongoing exercise at revitalizing and restructuring the work of the General Assembly. Against the background of all those changes, it becomes undeniable that the Security Council too must change and adapt. Reform of the Security Council is necessary not only to reflect a more equitable geographical representation but also to contribute to the strengthening of the democratization process within the intergovernmental multilateral process.

This issue of equitable representation on the Council and increase in its membership was first introduced 13 years ago. It became the subject last year of a productive debate which resulted in the adoption of resolution 47/62. This year the debate continues, and the issue is now broadening, as it should, from one of representation and membership to encompass all other aspects. In essence, a process is now under way - a tortuous and complex process, if necessary - to effect collectively change and reform of the Council.

Malaysia's comprehensive position is reflected in document A/48/264, dated 20 July 1993. I do not want to go over the details, but I shall reiterate the salient points. First, the reform of the Security Council should be comprehensive. Secondly, there must be transparency in the Council's decision-making process. Thirdly, the Council should be more accountable to the general membership. Fourthly, the Council should reflect a more equitable geographical representation.

It will be noticed that our approach is comprehensive. We believe there is no quick fix for the Council's serious problems and flaws. Important principles are involved, and they must be examined in the light of new realities. It would be a mistake to think, for example, that adding two permanent members would actually improve the Council. Preoccupation with the admission of two members would merely distort the important issues that must be addressed: increased workload, heightened expectations, questionable working methods, absence of adequate representation and ambiguous mandates and objectives.

During the debate on agenda item 11, "Report of the Security Council", my delegation elaborated on some of those matters. We expressed our concern over the tendency of the five permanent members to keep to themselves much of the Council's substantive work, turning the "permanent five" into some kind of exclusive club. We underlined our concern that the concept of United Nations collective security was being undermined by the application of double standards to serve the political interests or expediency of certain members. We cited the delayed and half-hearted measures to end Serbia's blatant aggression in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a clear example of the Council's selectivity and failure to act in all necessary cases.

We continue to maintain that the Council's unwillingness to enforce its resolutions and respect General Assembly resolutions 46/242 and 47/121, calling for the cessation of hostilities and for respect for humanitarian law in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, will definitely undermine the credibility and faith placed in the Security Council and the concept of collective security. We have pointed out the indefensible position taken by the Council in denying the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina its inherent right to collective or individual self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter.

Urgent reform is necessary to dispel perceptions that the Western-dominated Council increasingly resorts to questionable decisions, the implementation of which, in the main, is left to other Member States, particularly those of the third world. Such perceptions are based on peace-keeping operations, approved by the Council, from which major countries gradually dissociate themselves for various reasons. Somalia may well be a case in point. A situation may arise in the future in which troops of third world countries will be virtually the only ones left there.

As the custodian of international peace and security, the Council, in carrying out its responsibilities, must act in conformity with the provisions of the Charter, particularly Article 24. In this regard, before taking major decisions or actions, the Council is duty-bound to consult regional groupings, troop-contributing countries and the general membership. The Council's resolutions should reflect the common will of the community, and not serve the interests of permanent members and their allies. As the Secretary-General observed in his report "An Agenda for Peace", agreement among the permanent members of the Council must have the deeper support of the other members of the Council, and the membership more widely, if the Council's decisions are to be effective and endure.

The Council should strive to gain the trust and confidence of the general membership by reassuring us that it will put into practice the following principles: it will not be a vehicle for imposing the will of the strong upon the weak; it will avoid selective and discriminatory approaches to international crises; it will respect the principle of transparency and democracy and will become responsive to the views of the general membership; and it will not exceed its mandate under the Charter.

It is equally important that members of the Council bear in mind that their role in the Council extends beyond their national imperatives. The permanent members have a special responsibility because of the privileges accorded to them by the Charter. Therefore, they should not follow the dictates, or remain within the confines, of their narrow national interests.

As for the non-permanent members, they have a larger duty to a larger constituency: the regional group they come from and others that elected them. They have to resist, and not succumb to, pressure by other members of the Council. Malaysia will support efforts to ensure that those that gain membership of the Council are qualified in all respects to shoulder important responsibilities in that body.

Consistent with the principle of the sovereign equality of States, Malaysia is against adding more permanent members. We are also cautious about new classifications of membership. Further stratification can only deepen and harden the asymmetries existing in the Council.

The veto power, which guarantees the dominance of the five permanent members, has to be re-examined. It is our view that the veto power has now become untenable and anachronistic. If we need to accept some kind of weighting in terms of asymmetries within the Council, we cannot accept a situation in which one, two or three in the Council are more powerful than the rest of the membership of the United Nations.

It is time to reject collectively the idea of an elite group continuing to decide on issues that affect peace and security. The programme for the future, as contained in "An Agenda for Peace", cannot be fully undertaken with a Council that neither fully commands the confidence of the majority nor is drawn equitably from the general membership. There must be closer interaction between the General Assembly and the Security Council. Major decisions having significant global implications need to be taken in close consultation with the general membership. A revitalized United Nations must provide for an active General Assembly whose pronouncements on issues that are before the Council must be given weight by the Council.

Malaysia recognizes that the increased numbers of peace-keeping operations have imposed severe financial burdens on the five permanent members. In this connection, Malaysia would not be averse to considering more equitable burden-sharing. These and other relevant considerations could be discussed as the United Nations takes the necessary steps and measures to reform the Council.

Given the overwhelming desire to reform the Council, we welcome, Mr. President, your consultations to further the process. We are aware of the initiatives of some delegations, particularly India and Singapore, to assist you in that regard. We ourselves have been engaged in consultations with various delegations. The fundamental questions before us in this matter include those of mechanism and mandate.

On the specific issue of mechanism, we share the emerging consensus in favour of the establishment of an open-ended inter-sessional working group to address the reform issue. Given the importance of this issue, the working group could cooperate on the basis of joint coordination. Malaysia strongly supports the Non-Aligned Movement's decision to have two Co-Chairmen, with one of them coming from a developing country - Zimbabwe.

We fully support the Non-Aligned Movement's decision favouring a broad mandate for this group. The mandate could specifically include the following: increased membership, including size of and criteria for membership; effective and transparent functioning of the Council; and the relationship between the general membership and the Security Council.

While the working group should strive for consensus, it is important that we do not insist, as some do, that it be

spelled out, as this would be inconsistent with the practice of other Main Committees. I am reminded that the five permanent members have the veto power, and no amendment regarding the Security Council can be made without their consent.

We agree that this working group should try to complete its work before the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Malaysia looks forward to working with all delegations in ensuring the success of this working group.

A Council reformed both in structure and in substance and governed by accountability, democracy and transparency would contribute to a harmonious relationship between the Council and the General Assembly, and to making the United Nations the international vehicle for peace, democracy and development. If we work together, we have a unique opportunity to take steps in that direction. Otherwise, we will squander a golden opportunity and consign the United Nations to the fate of never living up to its full potential as envisaged in the Charter.

Mr. SAMHAN (United Arab Emirates) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The past few years have witnessed a great deal of international and regional interest in the role of the United Nations and, particularly, in the role of the Security Council, the United Nations organ which is directly responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. Hand in hand with this increasing interest, there have been unremitting efforts aimed at reconsidering the functioning and structures of the United Nations and its principal bodies. The object of the exercise is to ensure that the United Nations role in international relations should continue to be crucial, decisive and efficacious and should lead to radical solutions to the world's problems, conflicts and disputes in all their aspects.

The "Agenda for Peace" presented by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, which deals with preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding, reflects the urgent need to deal with today's realities. This requires an enhanced and effective role for the Security Council in consonance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. Hence the importance of the General Assembly's consideration of item 33 of the agenda entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council".

The structure of the Security Council has not been affected by the changes that have taken place in State relations or by the new international political equations. Its membership has remained unchanged since 1963. There can be no doubt that the increase in the membership of the United Nations requires the consideration of effective and practical steps that should be taken towards the restructuring of the Security Council and towards ensuring equitable representation on the Council together with the required increase in the Council's membership.

My delegation supports the view that a limited increase in the Council's membership will not have the effect of hampering its effectiveness or of limiting it. On the contrary, it will enhance the Council's ability to react rapidly to threats, challenges and violations of peace and international security.

In that context, the United Arab Emirates emphasizes the importance of engaging in a comprehensive exchange of views and proposals on the restructuring of the Council. This should be done through the setting up of an open-ended working group whose membership should be open to all Member States of the Organization. In this context, there is a need to take into account the fundamental and far-reaching changes that have taken place in international relations in the post-cold-war period, as well as the increase in the Organization's membership.

In order for the approach to the question of restructuring the Security Council in the light of the increasing numbers of conflicts and disputes on the international and regional levels, we must try to reconcile the following objectives: First, balance must be ensured between the ambitions of regions and individual States with regard to representation in a manner that would ensure appropriate representation of all segments of the international community, ensure democratization and provide for increased transparency in the functioning of the Council. In this context, the principle of the sovereign equality of States must be respected, since this was one of the fundamental principles of the Charter upon which the international Organization was founded.

Secondly, flexibility and efficiency in decision-making must be ensured because of the need for the Council to react in a rapid and effective manner to all threats to international peace and security.

Thirdly, States must abide by the principle of settling their disputes by peaceful means and dialogue in consonance with the principles of the Charter and the norms of international law.

Fourthly, coordination between the Security Council and the General Assembly must be enhanced, in the light of the increase in the international Organization's membership.

Fifthly, paragraph 1 of Article 24 of the Charter states that in carrying out its duties, the Security Council acts on behalf of all Member States. Consequently, the composition of the Council must be more representative. However, that increase should not adversely affect the efficiency of the Council or its responsibilities in the area of maintaining international peace and security.

We must also take into account the new political realities, given the radical changes that have taken place on the regional and international levels. In order for us to achieve these objectives, my delegation attaches particular importance to the question of equitable representation of the various regions on the Council. We emphasize the importance of ensuring permanent Arab representation on the Council because the Middle East has been plagued by wars and conflicts since the very inception of the United Nations, and this has had implications for international peace and security and for the political and economic conditions of the States of the Middle East.

We hope that our deliberations will yield positive and decisive results which will lead to an expanded and more effective Security Council. We hope this can be implemented in 1995, the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

In conclusion, I should like to express our gratitude to all States members of the Security Council for the important role it plays in the service of international peace and security. We sincerely hope that those States and in particular the permanent members of the Council will be able to play an active role in the task of adapting the role and action of the Council to the realities of our new world. All Members of the international Organization, large or small, must respect the Council's resolutions in order to create an international environment of coexistence, stability and peace and establish a new international order that would be more just, equitable and compatible with the common interests of all humanity.

Mr. LI Zhaoxing (China) *(interpretation from Chinese)*: In 1945 the founding fathers of the United Nations solemnly signed the United Nations Charter in San Francisco. Since that time, for 48 years, this intergovernmental Organization with the greatest representation has braved wind and rain.

For nearly half a century the United Nations has made unremitting efforts to realize the objectives embodied in the purposes and principles of the Charter, namely, the maintenance of world peace and security and the promotion of mankind's common prosperity and development. In this connection it has, despite many setbacks, scored marked achievements.

The world today is no longer the same as it was yesterday. The United Nations itself has also undergone tremendous changes, with its membership increased from 51 States at its inception to the current total of 184, most of which are developing countries. With its enhanced status in world affairs the United Nations plays an increasingly important role.

Now the common issue facing all United Nations Member States is how the United Nations, in meeting the challenges that have arisen from the new and changing situation, can play a more constructive role in international affairs, better fulfilling the responsibilities entrusted to it by the Charter and thereby contributing to the establishment of a new international political and economic order.

The Chinese delegation welcomes the General Assembly's consideration of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and attaches importance to this exercise. The Chinese Government has already made its observations within the context of General Assembly resolution 47/62. We are willing to continue to discuss and exchange views on this issue with other delegations.

The expansion of the membership of the Security Council not only is the expressed wish and legitimate request of the overwhelming majority of United Nations Member States, especially the developing countries, but is also necessitated by the changes both in the world and in the United Nations itself. The Chinese delegation is in favour of an appropriate expansion of the Security Council at an appropriate time so that, with its greater representation, the Council could better adapt to the changing world and deal with major world issues in a more active, balanced, fair and effective manner. In the expansion of the Security Council, therefore, full consideration should be given to the principle of equitable geographical distribution and particular attention should be paid to the fact that the overwhelming majority of the United Nations membership consists of developing countries.

In addition to the question of the Council's expansion, countries have also shown interest in such issues as how to increase the transparency of the work of the Council and how to identify the United Nations membership with its decisions.

According to the relevant provisions of the Charter, the Security Council acts on behalf of the entire United Nations membership in carrying out its duties for the maintenance of international peace and security. The actions of the Council should reflect the collective will,

common aspirations and accountability to all Member States. It is therefore extremely important for the Council to adopt appropriate measures to increase the transparency of its work and strengthen its links with Member States. The Chinese delegation is in favour of the Council's making continued efforts in this regard. From the long-term point of view such a practice will contribute to the increased efficacy of the Council as well as to the authority and effectiveness of its decision-making.

It is the wish of all United Nations Member States that the Council, by expanding its membership and taking other related steps, will improve its representation and discharge in a more satisfactory way its responsibilities under the Charter, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. In this connection the Chinese delegation shares the views of many other countries that no reform measures should adversely affect and weaken the Council's efficacious role and existing viable mechanism.

Meanwhile, we also believe that the expansion of the Council and the manner in which it is to be expanded will have a direct bearing on world peace and security and affect the fundamental interests of Member States. An appropriate solution can be found only after full and wide-ranging solicitation of the views of Member States, especially those of medium-sized and small countries, and on the basis of consensual acceptance by all Member States. The Chinese delegation is therefore in favour of establishing a working group in which all Member States would participate, to discuss the expansion of the Council and other related matters.

The United Nations is now at a historic transitional juncture. The Chinese delegation sincerely hopes that with the concerted efforts and cooperation of all Member States the United Nations will become a better, more effective and more reliable international organization.

Mr. HAYES (Ireland): The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Ireland addressed the subject of Security Council reform in his statement in the general debate at this session, as, indeed, did his predecessor as Minister for Foreign Affairs at the forty-seventh session. My delegation also spoke on the subject in the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization on 5 March this year. In this statement I will not add significantly to the substance of those contributions; rather will I seek to focus our views more closely on the negotiations - which were then foreseen but which now, we hope, are imminent - in an appropriately mandated working group.

Let me begin by referring to Articles 24 and 25 of the Charter. In paragraph 1 of Article 24 the Member States confer on the Security Council the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security and agree that in performing this function it acts on behalf of all the Member States. In Article 25 the Member States agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council.

Those provisions represent an unprecedented voluntary transfer of power by the founding Member States, since endorsed by the States, including Ireland, which became Members of the United Nations later. It is our belief that in this transfer of power the Member States, both the founding States and those later acceding, were motivated principally by three assumptions: first, a recognition that only a body of limited size could achieve the necessary efficiency and expedition; secondly, satisfaction that its composition would make it adequately representative of the United Nations membership; and, thirdly, the latter two assumptions being met, confidence that its actions would reflect the will of the membership.

In essence, we believe, the authority of the Security Council, which legally derives from Articles 24 and 25 of the Charter, rests ultimately on the Member States' perceptions of its legitimacy, which, in turn, is based on these three assumptions.

It has become a cliché - and, of course, it is correspondingly true - that the geopolitical world has changed utterly, particularly in recent years, and that the Security Council is consequently enabled to perform as was originally intended by the drafters of the Charter. The Council is also faced with a multiplicity of widely varied threats to international peace and security. Concern to ensure that it is equipped to cope effectively with the kind of problems that now confront it and, unfortunately, are likely to continue to confront it into the twenty-first century is what lies behind the movement - a movement that has been gathering momentum, especially in the last two years - to consider whether and how the Security Council should be reformed. In the view of my delegation, the specific major concern must be to act so as to ensure that the perception of legitimacy on which the authority of the Council ultimately rests is not eroded.

There are therefore certain considerations to which my delegation will have regard in the forthcoming negotiations. The composition of the Security Council needs to be adjusted to take account of the greatly increased membership - now almost universal - of the United Nations and also of the changes in the centres of political and economic power that have taken place since 1945. It seems unlikely that this can be achieved without some enlargement, which will raise further difficult questions, including important procedural ones.

Moreover, the Security Council's ability to act efficiently and expeditiously must be preserved - a need that has implications both for the Council's size and for its procedures. And the Security Council must not only act, as it is required to do, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter, but must be seen to do so. We must consider how that transparency can be consistently achieved. My delegation recognizes that, while these considerations sound relatively clear and simple, their application to the detailed issues that will arise will not always be easy.

Mr. Martini Herrera (Guatemala), Vice-President, took the Chair.

My delegation's constant aim in the course of the negotiations on which we are about to embark will be to ensure such a relationship between the Security Council and the general membership of the United Nations that, together, they will continuously share a sense of common purpose. Our positions will be geared to that aim above all. We intend to play an active and constructive part in the negotiations. What an achievement it would be for us all, and what a boost for the public image of the United Nations, if our negotiations were to result in agreement in time for the fiftieth anniversary.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): This is a very important debate. It is a product of the fact that the United Nations is in transit. We have a "new world" on our hands, but it is not yet an "order". Since the cold war ended, four years ago, the United Nations has embarked on more new peace-keeping, peacemaking, peace-enforcing and peace-building operations than it entered into in the whole of the preceding 43 years. We are in transit from the system in which we were frozen during those years, and we need to design the place where we will land.

In his book *Co-operating for Peace*, which was distributed to the Assembly on 27 September, the Australian Foreign Minister, Senator Gareth Evans, argues that great reform is required in the area of "the maintenance of international peace and security" and that the goal of that reform should be a determination to replace past notions of "collective security" and "common security" with the notion of "co-operative security". Only if we enter into an unprecedented act of international cooperation will we survive our transit - our passage from the old to the new - and land safely. A redesigned Security Council is an integral part of the necessary change from the old to the new.

My statement today will put Australia's point of view on how we might best approach that change. In stating our view, I want to make this clear at the outset: a great debate is at hand, and we shall take part in it, in cooperation with others, and shall do so with an open mind. Naturally, we hope that such an approach will characterize the debate - an open mind and a willingness to craft an outcome that serves the welfare of the whole international community.

Three main questions are at issue: "Why do it at all?", "What should we do?" and "How should we do it?".

The first question - "Why do it at all?" - is not raised by us because we think that this remains a matter of doubt. It is abundantly clear that there is widespread recognition throughout the Assembly that the Security Council must be changed. Earlier, there were echoes of the argument "If it ain't broke, don't fix it". Although that sounds folksy and wise, it is, in fact, a view that is misguided because it implies that we have to wait until something has broken down before taking action.

Australia does not suggest that the Security Council has broken down, but we are convinced, as are many others, that we can see now the need to change the Council before it breaks down. That the Security Council is under strain is illustrated in very many ways. Here is just one example: from 1948 to 1987 the Council adopted 15 resolutions under Chapter VII, whereas the corresponding figure for the period 1990 to the present is 58.

We must know clearly why we are embarked on an exercise as important as this. This will serve to maintain our focus on the main issues as against the peripheral issues. There is no substitute for not only doing the right thing but being certain that we are doing it for the right reasons.

In this context it is of irreducible importance to focus on Article 25 of the Charter. What it means in basic political and legal terms is that, because the decisions of the Council are binding upon all Member States, it is essential that, as far as possible, all decisions of the Council are able to command widespread if not consensual support from the whole membership, not just from a majority of members of the Council, or from all or some of the permanent members. The latter have particular powers under the Charter, but all of us have the same obligations and responsibilities.

One key way in which such consensual support for the Council's decisions can be shored up is by increasing the representative character of the Council. Although the Charter names certain Member States as permanent members, the rest of the membership of the Council is elected by the General Assembly - the universal body - and for this reason, as well as for other reasons found in the

Charter, the Security Council is, in good measure, a representative body derived from the General Assembly. In addition, it has clearly defined responsibilities towards the Assembly and the overall membership of the United Nations.

Given the increase that has taken place in that overall membership, and given that the size of the Council has remained static for 28 years, the Council's representative character has clearly declined, and many point out that this decline has been more than a decline measured in arithmetic proportions.

Many other arguments are advanced as reasons for reform - indeed, urgent reform - of the Council. But in the Australian view the need for the Council's decisions to command consensual support, and thus for it to have its representative character in relation to the overall membership restored, is among the most important such reasons for reform.

The second question - What should we do? - is the one on which it is already clear there will be a great variety of opinion and much debate. Australia's approach to this question is utterly rooted in one abiding concern: we must ensure that the new Council is effective. Change for the sake of change would make no sense if it led to a situation in which a new Council was less able to carry out its heavy responsibilities than the present one.

An effective Council will be one in which the membership is expanded to ensure that the Council better represents the universal membership than it does today. That expansion in its membership will take into account the criteria found in Article 23 of the Charter, perhaps bearing in mind particularly the third of the criteria, namely, equitable geographical distribution. The expansion will be kept within strict numerical limits, because, as is widely recognized, there is a size beyond which it is extremely difficult to think that the Council will be able to function effectively, simply because of the inherent dynamics of organs larger than, say, 25 members. Indeed, a number closer to 20 would be even more effective. Finally, it will not be made harder for decisions to be taken than is the case at present. It is for this reason that in the Australian reply to the Secretary-General's request for the views of Member States we stated that there should be no extension of the veto power even if the number of permanent members of the Council was increased. In this context, our reply stated:

> "Changes to the Council's composition must be related to and considered in tandem with a review of the Council's decision-making methods, which would then apply in an expanded Council". *(A/48/264, p. 8, para. 3 (b))*

There is no better way for me to sum up Australia's approach to why the Council must be reformed, and to the way in which it should be changed, than to refer again to Senator Evans's book *Co-operating for Peace*, in which he states:

> "Increasing attention is being focused on the Council's representativeness ... Its decisions ultimately depend for their effect on the extent of international support, which will in turn be influenced by the degree to which the Council is perceived to be adequately representative of the overall United Nations membership and to reflect the realities of global and regional power. To retain its legitimacy the Council must be seen to have a global range and be willing to turn its attention to conflicts and threats to international peace and security whenever the situation requires, rather than in accordance with the dictates of the national interests of individual Council members ... Security Council reform should address not only the issue of representativeness but also the need to enhance decision-making procedures."

I now turn to the third question: How will we achieve this reform? This seems to us to have three main answers. First, we must create a working group open to all members of the General Assembly in which we will have a full and open discussion of all the issues involved - membership, decision-making methodology, effectiveness and responsibility to the whole United Nations community.

Secondly, we must work vigorously and quickly. A report should be available by the end of the forty-eighth session so that we can go further in 1995 with a view to bringing home consensus by the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. This is not an arbitrary and certainly not a false deadline. The need for reform is urgent. It is demanded by our changed world, and those demands cannot be expected to diminish in the years ahead. Having a consensus ready by 1995 might mean - might mean - that the new Council would not be in operation until two or three years after that date, because of the period of time required for the process of ratification of changes in the Charter. So the question becomes: Can we afford to move less quickly? We think not.

Thirdly, with all of what we have already said in this statement about the need for the decisions of the Council to rest on a bedrock of consensus, so must we ensure that our decision to reform the Council itself rests on that same foundation. Consensus must be the rule in all things within the working group.

These are the Australian points of view on what we believe are the three main questions or categories of questions at issue in the historic work we are about to undertake - the work of reform of the organ of the United Nations uniquely charged with the maintenance of international peace and security.

But there are two related concerns that we should not ignore as we review the Council itself. These are the Council's relationship with other organs of the United Nations - in particular, the General Assembly - and the need for us to work with a more highly textured definition than we have employed in the past of what constitutes a threat to peace and security.

The relationship between the Council and the General Assembly has come to lack adequate mutual respect, and this has harmed the effectiveness of the Organization. It has led to inadequate transfer of information between the two bodies and, naturally, it has caused unnecessary and damaging resentment. This situation is not consistent with the relationship between the two bodies that was envisaged at San Francisco and set forth in the Charter.

Means of improved consultation and transfer of information between the two bodies can be found, and they must be found. Means of cooperation between the two can be created readily - for example by the Security Council's establishing committees on subjects such as peace-keeping, troop contributions or the prevention of conflicts, committees on which non-members of the Council could sit.

The Council could also take greater heed of what has been said in recent years in the Assembly - and said forcefully - about the nature, timeliness and quality of its report to the General Assembly. The Council could also make a greater effort to take into account seriously - not just notionally, but seriously - the views expressed by the Assembly. In this context, too much refuge should not be taken in Article 12 of the Charter.

On the side of the Assembly, there has been fair comment to the effect that if its views and requests are to be taken more seriously into account in the future, then it might have to consider crafting its positions with greater attention to practical rather than ideological concerns - in other words, somewhat more in a spirit of cooperating for peace than has been the case in the past. Surely the end of bipolar dominance of world politics should make it easier for the Assembly to adopt such a stance.

A fundamental concept at issue in all of this, one central to the role assigned to the Security Council in the Charter, is that of what constitutes a threat to international peace and security. In large measure, the Charter defines this in terms of sovereignty, in terms of the integrity and inviolability of States, and in terms of the use or threat of use of force - including by the United Nations.

Many have commented on the fact that, understandably, this definition, made as it was at the end of the Second World War, was framed largely in terms of military threats to security. But the reality in today's world and in the foreseeable future is that for most peoples as distinct from States - but indeed in many instances also including States - the most evident threats to security are either non-military or a mixture of non-military and military threats rather than pure or classic aggression, or solely military-based threats to security. It was for this reason that at its Summit meeting in January 1992 the Security Council incorporated into its statement the following passage:

> "The absence of war and military conflicts amongst States does not in itself ensure international peace and security. The non-military sources of instability in the economic, social, humanitarian and ecological fields have become threats to peace and security." *(S/23500, p. 3)*

Australia shares that view, and believes firmly that in the future we will need to ensure that we increasingly work with such a more highly textured definition of threats to peace and security. We would then address the real threats faced by so many people, and this should lead to a consequential redirection of the attention, the energy and the resources of the Security Council, the General Assembly and other organs and agencies of the United Nations system.

Speaking of the latter, I would point out that it is relevant that the Charter foresaw an important relationship between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, and established in Article 65 a creative relationship between the two, the potentiality of which was ignored during the cold-war period. There have already been proposals for reviving that relationship. They should be pursued.

In this same context, we must also pay greater attention to implementing Article 55 of the Charter, in which the positive connection is recognized between economic and social welfare and

> "the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations".

Article 56 pledges us all - it is indeed a pledge - to achieve the purposes set forth in Article 55.

Finally, I come to a point held to be fundamental by my Government. We have sorely neglected preventive action by the United Nations. That part of our work was the most evident, if not in fact the pre-eminent, victim of the cold war. The Charter system is composed of a Secretary-General, empowered to bring to the Council his perspectives, concerns and recommendations; the General Assembly of nations aware of and sensitive to problems developing in the world; the Security Council, with unique power to take decisions and mobilize resources. All of these facilities found in the Charter should have been directed extensively and vigorously to identifying problems and disputes before they escalated into armed conflict and to recommending and mounting solutions to those problems earlier rather than later. To those Charter-based facilities must now be added, in this information age, the dramatic expansion of media- and technology-based sources of information which have enabled us to be aware of emerging problems to an extent simply inconceivable 10 years ago.

As we review the Security Council let us ensure that it does its traditional job effectively, in a representative way, and that it takes decisions able to command widespread consensus in the world community. But let us also make it a modern place, a place dealing with a concept of threats to peace and security that is real in terms of what most people experience and in terms of what characterizes our contemporary and foreseeable world. And let us equip it and direct it, as far as possible, to seek to prevent rather than be compelled to cure conflict.

In conclusion, I repeat that we are in transit. We will land in a better world if we provide it with a Security Council fit for today's and tomorrow's circumstances, not yesterday's.

Mr. ELARABY (Egypt): The last few years have been characterized by rapid, far-reaching developments. As a result, the form and the substance of our contemporary world have drastically changed. These changes have created opportunities for cooperation, while confronting the United Nations with new challenges.

In order for the United Nations to adapt successfully to these rapid changes and these increasing challenges, a comprehensive re-examination of its principal organs has become imperative. Thus, an objective and functional approach to striving for improvement and reform should be adopted without delay.

The Security Council is the organ vested with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It should, therefore, be a primary target for reform. It should be recalled that when the Security Council was rendered inactive during the ideological confrontation of the cold war, a basic postulate of the Charter crumbled, and as a consequence the whole United Nations system suffered. The United Nations, which was created as an action-oriented organization, became helpless when faced with grave breaches of the peace and sometimes even became motionless when naked aggression was perpetrated.

Today's world power structure and the patterns of inter-State conduct augur well for a more responsive United Nations. Yet, this circumstance might lead to our being faced with a more potent Security Council; that should be the subject of careful reflection by the whole membership.

The Charter established certain checks and balances which should always be respected. In our contemporary world, it is fashionable to pronounce the concept of absolute sovereignty an anachronism. This dictum by necessity applies across the board. As provided in Article 24 (1) of the Charter, the Council acts on behalf of the whole membership. Hence it is accountable to the Member States and it is accountable to the General Assembly. The Council's exercise of its vast and unprecedented powers is not limitless. It could, if the need arose, be subject to review by the International Court of Justice to ensure that the rule of law and justice is paramount.

The General Assembly commenced the re-examination process and adopted resolution 47/62, which recognized the changed international situation and the need to continue the process of revitalization and restructuring within the United Nations system. The Secretary General's report (A/48/264) prepared pursuant to the aforementioned resolution clearly reflects the overwhelming support of Member States for efforts to re-examine, expand and reform the Security Council. There is now broad agreement on the need to enhance the democratic aspects of the composition and working methods of the Security Council, even more so in light of recent events which have clearly reaffirmed the pivotal role the Council plays in the field of maintenance of international peace and security.

Egypt, therefore, considers that equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council represents an integral component of the overall effort to improve and enhance the ability of the Council to fulfil its responsibilities as prescribed in the Charter.

We believe that the enlargement of the membership of the Security Council is an essential step to initiate the process of strengthening the Council. However, this should be done without prejudice to the efficiency and effectiveness of the work of the Council and should reflect both the nature and the extent of the new balance of power, as well as the prominence of regional Powers as major international actors, with due regard being paid, in this context, to the interests of developing countries. It should always be borne in mind that a larger and more equitably representative Council will certainly be more responsive and more credible.

It is therefore only appropriate to take a fresh look at the composition of the Council with a view to reflecting accurately the increase in United Nations membership as well as the realities of the international and regional power structures. To this end Egypt, in its response to the Secretary General's invitation to Governments for comments, proposed that

> "In order to take into account the new developments that have recently emerged in our contemporary world, it would be beneficial to devise a new category of membership in the Council that recognizes present regional realities. An intermediate group of members between the permanent members and the non-permanent ones should be established. A possible formula to address this issue would be to establish in each region one or more seats without veto power to rotate between the major Powers of that region. In this context, due regard should be paid - in accordance with the provisions of Article 23, of the Charter - to the contribution of States Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and other purposes of the Organization, including participation in peace-keeping operations, where developing countries are offering a substantial contribution and assuming increasing responsibilities." (*A/48/264/Add.2, pp. 2 and 3*)

In our view the establishment of an open-ended working group to consider the composition of the Security Council is clearly a step in the right direction. We firmly believe that such a working group should consider all matters related to the functioning of the Security Council. The programme of the working group should comprise an overall review of the practices, methods and procedures of the Council, as well as its relations with the General Assembly and other principal organs established by the Charter, to ensure the most efficient, democratic and transparent decision-making process.

A draft resolution on this item has been negotiated among a large number of States representing all regions. I would like to thank the delegations of Singapore and India for the leadership role they performed admirably. The final version of the draft is a compromise which was carefully balanced. General formulations were used when it became apparent that it was not possible to spell out the real intent. One point, however, is quite clear. The draft rightly asserts that the working group would be mindful of the importance of reaching general agreement. On such a sensitive issue, we agree that all delegations should strive to attain general agreement. This should not, however, be construed as conferring on any delegation, or a number of delegations, a veto power to frustrate the work. It is also relevant to point out that the attainment of general agreement should be confined to the end-product of our work and should not apply to the various phases of the working process.

I wish to commend the President of the General Assembly for having taken the initiative on this matter, and to reiterate the intention of my delegation to participate actively in the discussions of the working group which, we hope, will successfully conclude its work before the conclusion of the current session of the General Assembly, thus enabling the next session of the Assembly to commence the required process of ratifying amendments to the Charter as soon as possible and as provided for in its Article 108.

In conclusion, it is submitted that, in the final analysis, the original Charter design has been altered. Many of the Charter concepts proved impractical and have been tacitly abandoned. New trends and concepts have emerged and gained acceptance through gradual evolution. The previously well-advertised shortcomings of the United Nations should be jointly addressed, and suitable measures to ensure a more effective system should be decided upon. Interaction between emerging trends and concepts could create auspicious conditions for a more effective and responsive United Nations.

Mr. GRAF ZU RANTZAU (Germany): In the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council's areas of primary responsibility are set out as maintaining international peace and security and ensuring prompt and effective action by the United Nations. It is therefore of the essence that the Security Council enjoy the greatest possible credibility. My Government agrees with the overwhelming majority of Member States that the changed international situation and the constant increase of the membership of the United Nations necessitate a review of the present size of the Security Council.

This issue has been the subject of ever-more-intense debate within the United Nations for a number of years. Resolution 47/62, which was adopted on an Indian

initiative in 1992, requested the Secretary-General to invite Member States to submit written comments on a possible review of Security Council membership and thus created a basis for further discussion. Seventy-five Members have in the meantime complied with the Secretary-General's request for comments. The large number of replies and their contents are ample proof of the need to deal with this issue in a comprehensive way. The Secretary-General, in his report of September 1993 on the work of the Organization, stated that "proposals warranting serious study are now on the table". *(A/48/1, para. 40)*

At this point in my very brief remarks I would like to quote the following from the statement of Germany's Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs on 29 September before the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly:

> "The most important decisions on security and peace are today made in the Security Council. This is what the Charter envisaged right from the start. Anyone who wants peace must strengthen the Security Council.
>
> "In its response to the Secretary-General's request, the Federal Government has stated that efficiency and credibility are of equal importance for the future composition of the Security Council.
>
> "Germany is prepared to assume responsibility as a permanent member of the Security Council also. ... However, we will be able to maintain and strengthen the credibility of the Council only if, in deliberating on reforming it, we also take into consideration the growing importance of the [developing countries]." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 8th meeting, p. 18)*

In order to find an answer to the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, we endorse firmly the establishment of an open-ended working group and at the same time commit ourselves to constructive participation in the work of this group with the aim of strengthening the United Nations as a whole. I shall reserve detailed comments for the deliberations in that group.

In conclusion, may I remark that, to us, it appears that the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization, in 1995, could serve as orientation for the deliberations of that working group.

Mr. BURCUOĞLU (Turkey): There have been profound changes in the framework and substance of international relations in the past few years. And yet the creation of a new and desirable international order continues to be the most challenging task of our times. The crucial moments of history in which we are living call for reflection and positive action. The international community should not passively witness change but must have the will to establish adequate mechanisms to control its direction.

In this connection, the focus should be the Security Council. Today, the prestige and credibility of the United Nations depend more than ever on the effectiveness of the Security Council, which carries the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The end of the cold war freed the Security Council from political constraints and enabled it to assume a vastly expanded role. The new international environment requires a fresh approach to the Security Council and a re-examination of its role. To enable the Security Council to discharge its expanded responsibilities more effectively and efficiently, the moral authority of the Council should be reinforced. This would require that the Security Council become more representative of and responsive to the new geopolitical and economic realities. At the same time, its working methods should be reviewed to reflect the spirit of democratization. Hence, the discussions on the question of equitable representation and the focus on the increase in the membership of the Security Council are very timely and should lead to an early restructuring of the Council.

Having taken note of the reports of the Secretary-General containing the views of 75 Member States, we are pleased to observe that there is a broad consensus on the following four points. First, the effectiveness of the Security Council is important; but, secondly, so are the credibility and moral authority of the Council. Thirdly, there should be an increase in the membership of the Security Council. Fourthly, the working methods of the Council should be reviewed and the Council should become more transparent and democratic in its decision-making process.

We are also glad to note that some progress has already been achieved in relation to transparency. The mechanisms which were adopted by the Security Council on 30 June 1993 and are set forth in document S/26015 represent a commitment to and a step forward in the process of transparency. However, more could and should be done.

Under Article 25 of the Charter the Member States agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. This makes the Council unique within the United Nations system. The authority of the Security Council's decisions emanates from the fact that the Council, in

accordance with Article 24 of the Charter, acts on behalf of all Members of the United Nations. For that reason, its decision-making process is of the utmost importance, and it is essential that the Council's decisions should be in accord with the views of the general membership.

The fact that the Council's resolutions must have an adequate consensual base is also inherent in the letter and spirit of paragraph 4 of Article 1 of the Charter, which lists harmonizing the actions of nations as one of the purposes of the United Nations. Accordingly, the legitimacy of Council action ultimately turns on the degree of consensus, expressed through political mechanisms rather than legal concepts. Therefore, the lack of sufficient consultation mechanisms undermines the legitimacy of Council resolutions.

In practical terms, what is now needed is a system of consultation that would enable the general membership to participate, where and if necessary, in the informal consultations of the Council. It is for this reason that the growing number of Chapter VII actions and the very limited consultations held thereon are causing great concern amongst the general membership. Since all Member States must comply with sanctions imposed by the United Nations, at least those most affected should be able to participate fully in the decision-making process.

Unfortunately, the Council's current method of working relies heavily on the permanent five and on closed informal consultations. Further procedures should be devised to render this system more democratic, for the benefit of non-members. All parties directly involved in a dispute of which the Security Council is seized, including non-member States, should be invited to take part in these deliberations. Also, the Security Council should hold more frequent public meetings to allow the general membership to participate in debates on matters of interest to them.

As expressed by my Foreign Minister, Mr. Hikmet Çetin, in his statement to the General Assembly on 30 September, we firmly believe that:

> "enlarging the Security Council membership would enhance its effectiveness." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 11th meeting, p. 35)*

But enlargement should not be conceived only as an increase in the number of members; it should also envisage the creation of a new category of seats to be held by States that could be qualified as semi-permanent members. Semi-permanent membership in the Council might rotate among a specific number of States designated according to objective criteria: population, representative weight, geopolitical posture, economic potential, record of contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and geographical distribution. We are particularly pleased to note that a considerable number of countries have made similar proposals in relation to the creation of a new category of membership and the application of the rotation principle.

We also hold the view that the Security Council must be representative both quantitatively and qualitatively. In other words, we must find ways and means to eliminate the possibility that a United Nations Member with a significantly large population might not serve on the Council for a very long period of time. That possibility is also in contradiction with the preamble to the Charter, which begins:

> "We the peoples of the United Nations ...".

It also undermines the representative weight of the Council.

Democratization of the Council's structure would be a further encouragement for the States Members of the United Nations to participate actively in the Council's work, and would strengthen the moral ground for the implementation of its resolutions. Otherwise, public support for the Security Council's activities will not be forthcoming.

One of the most urgent tasks before us is the institution of a system of checks and balances. Actually, the democratic principle of accountability is immanent in the Charter; what we must do now is to reactivate its relevant Articles. In this context, and since the bipolar domination of the international system is now behind us, we believe that the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly merits reconsideration.

Indeed, paragraph 1 of Article 15 of the Charter states that the General Assembly shall not only "receive" but also "consider" annual and special reports from the Security Council. In this connection, the reports of the Security Council to the General Assembly should be more substantive, in order to provide an adequate basis for the general membership thoroughly to "consider" the work of the Council.

There is sufficient creative thinking and a wide-ranging demand for an early restructuring of the Security Council. We must start our work as soon as possible. We hope that we shall be able to establish, by consensus, an open-ended working group with the mandate of Security Council reform. Such a working group should start its work on the basis of the reports of the Secretary-General,

which comprise the views of 75 Member States. The interlocking concepts of effectiveness, representativeness, transparency, accountability, credibility, legitimacy and moral authority should guide the deliberations of the working group. Our aim should be to enhance all these concepts. We must rise to the challenge.

Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Thailand): My delegation is pleased that the agenda item on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council is being taken up again by the General Assembly at its current session.

The issue is gaining greater attention at an appropriate juncture in the history of the United Nations. The importance of the United Nations and its organs today cannot be overstated. Member States are continually making efforts to revitalize and restructure the United Nations, indicating the increasingly crucial role of the United Nations as the world's single most comprehensive multilateral forum today.

In the post-cold-war era the demand for the United Nations to be what its founding fathers wanted it to be is ever more relevant and necessary, and becomes a pressing concern when it is evident that what the world needs is collectivism and resolve. The maintenance of international peace and security and the requirements for humanitarian assistance have indeed made the United Nations the principal mechanism for translating the collective will of the international community into tangible results, albeit with varying degrees of success.

The agent to which the Charter entrusts the authority to act in these circumstances is the Security Council, but there is increasingly being felt the wish of the general membership of the Organization to see that the United Nations is more balanced and more representative of its membership, especially within its most important agent responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The responses by Member States to last year's resolution 47/62 on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council amply demonstrated a continuing desire by members of the Assembly to see change in the decision-making processes that pertain to the management of international peace and security.

It is with a similar concern and desire for change that my delegation wishes to participate in this debate. We believe that dialogue is the first step in any process of change. Sharing common concerns and avoiding confrontation is perhaps the best way to improve the United Nations in the prevailing post-cold-war environment.

The United Nations and its relevant bodies have undergone many changes; yet the Security Council has remained much the same since 1945. As stipulated in Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, the General Assembly has conferred on the Security Council the primary responsibility to maintain peace and security and to act on its behalf. It is therefore appropriate that the views of the General Assembly be sought. We do not seek to go beyond the mandate of the General Assembly as set out in Article 12 of the United Nations Charter. However, my delegation believes that the times warrant a comprehensive review of the Security Council. More important, the issue of equitable representation should be an integral part of this review.

The last time the Security Council was enlarged was in 1963. This was based on the rationale that United Nations membership had significantly increased - from 51 Members in 1954 to 113 in 1963. Now, 30 years have passed, and there are 184 Members. Profound changes in the international system and in the configuration of power as well as the increase in the number of new Member States are valid grounds on which to consider all aspects of the question of increasing the membership of the Security Council. The examination of this issue must include a review of matters relating to the working methods of the Security Council and to the evolving relationship of the Security Council and the United Nations membership as a whole. My delegation realizes that this could be a long process. It is all the more urgent, then, that we take the initial step as soon as possible.

My delegation firmly believes that this review should be based on the principles stated in Article 23 of the Charter. We are also willing to consider an increase in the number of permanent or non-permanent members, as well as other categories of membership. The Secretary-General's report (A/48/264 and Add.1-4) would provide a useful and valuable background for this consideration. The opinions sent to the Secretary-General by Governments would also be of great importance to our deliberations on these issues.

An important matter related to the reform of the Security Council has to be the question of effective functioning and transparency in its working methods. While exigencies arising from various conflicts in the world have necessitated that the Security Council discharge its responsibilities promptly and expeditiously, there is no viable substitute for a transparent and democratic process that rests on a broad foundation of support by the membership as a whole. Decisions made by the Security Council must be, and must be seen to be, made openly for

these decisions to garner the broad-based support they need to be effective. One small but effective method to help increase communication and improve understanding of the Council's decisions could be the establishment of a link through a spokesperson - a device that might be possible under the provisions of Article 12.2 - or perhaps by the maintenance of regular contact with regional groups.

These matters are closely linked and fully relevant to another important question which cannot be ignored: the relationship between the Security Council and the membership as a whole - that is, the General Assembly. With better communication between the Security Council and the General Assembly, there is also the likelihood that a better relationship will emerge as a result.

Although this issue is not one which will be easy to resolve, neither is it an intractable problem, given the political will of Member States to cooperate and, together, to find a workable solution. We have done it before in the past, and we can do it even better in the days ahead. Certainly, by the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, in 1995, we should have the full implementation of the reform we now seek to institute for the Security Council. Towards these ends, the Thai delegation is willing to be an active participant in and is fully supportive of the undertakings we are embarking upon under this important item in the plenary Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.